United Nations E/AC.51/2002/8

Economic and Social Council

Distr.: General
17 April 2002

Original: English

Committee for Programme and Coordination
Forty-second Session
10 June-5 July 2002
Substantive session
Item 5 (b) of the provisional agenda*
Coordination questions: United Nations System-wide Special Initiative for the Implementation of the United Nations New Agenda for the Development of Africa in the 1990s

The United Nations System-wide Special Initiative on Africa in the context of the Final Evaluation of the United Nations New Agenda for the Development of Africa in the 1990s

Report of the Secretary-General**

Summary

The present report has been prepared in response to a request made by the Committee for Programme and Coordination (CPC) at its forty-first session. Against the backdrop of various issues raised by CPC regarding some of the major findings and conclusions of the final evaluation of the United Nations System-wide Special Initiative on Africa (UNSIA), the report discusses some of the positive accomplishments of UNSIA in the selected sectors and draws salient lessons for future United Nations coordination mechanisms. It acknowledges the emergence of the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD), an African-owned and led initiative, since the forty-first session of CPC. This initiative has been widely accepted as the new framework to guide the international community in its responses to development priorities for Africa. With the coming to an end of the United Nations New Agenda for the Development of Africa in the 1990s and the expected adoption

* E/AC.51/2002/1.

** The delay in the presentation of the present report was due to the fact that, UNSIA being the implementing arm of UN-NADAF, it was believed that the report could benefit from the preliminary results of the independent evaluation of UN-NADAF. The Panel of Eminent Persons for the independent evaluation of UN-NADAF finished its work at the end of March and its findings have been taken into account in the present report.

02-33954 (E) 060502

of NEPAD as the framework for United Nations support to African development, it would not be necessary to maintain UNSIA as a separate United Nations initiative on African development and it should cease to exist. As regards the future of United Nations coordination, the way forward is for the United Nations system to unite in supporting NEPAD. As soon as programmatic details are finalized within the NEPAD framework, there should be an appropriate coordinated United Nations response to its implementation, drawing on the lessons learned from the UNSIA process and building on current United Nations system coordinating mechanisms.

I. Background

Deliberations of the Committee for Programme and Coordination

1. The present report has been prepared in compliance with a request made by the Committee for Programme and Coordination (CPC) at its forty-first session, held from 11 June to 6 July 2001.[1] At that session, CPC considered the independent evaluation of the United Nations System-wide Initiative on Africa (UNSIA)[2] and the note by the Secretary-General on the matter.[3] CPC raised some doubts about the evaluation report. It was also concerned that United Nations agencies that had given positive progress reports on UNSIA up to the previous year had strongly supported the main finding of the evaluation that the special initiative be discontinued. CPC found the closure of UNSIA at that stage premature and therefore requested that a more detailed examination be conducted of UNSIA in the context of the final evaluation of the United Nations New Agenda for the Development of Africa in the 1990s (UN-NADAF), and that a report be submitted at its forty-second session.

2. Since its inception, UNSIA has been reviewed by CPC on an annual basis. At the thirty-seventh session of the Committee, one year after the launch of UNSIA, on the recommendation of the Steering Committee of the Administrative Committee on Coordination, the decision was taken to abandon the System-wide Plan of Action for African Economic Recovery and Development in favour of UNSIA, which was considered of greater operational potential.[4] The priorities[5] were the same in both programme frameworks and the genesis of the coordination architecture of "clustering" with lead and cooperating agencies (the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and the Economic Commission for Africa (ECA)) was set. CPC reaffirmed that UN-NADAF represented the overall political framework designed to galvanize international support for Africa. In that context, UNSIA was recognized as the implementation mechanism of UN-NADAF, bringing added value in terms of system-wide synergies, engendering national ownership and commitment and forming a stronger basis for resource mobilization.[6] As earlier initiatives were deemed to be less than successful, this relationship was particularly relevant.

3. In tracking the progress of UNSIA, CPC drew attention to the need to avoid the proliferation of initiatives and to work for greater coordination and harmonization among United Nations programmes for economic recovery and development in Africa.[7] The further observation was made that although UNSIA was increasing in importance, it was failing to reach a sufficiently large number of countries in Africa and did not address all the priorities of UN-NADAF. CPC counselled that UNSIA needed to be more comprehensive and recommended the inclusion of the priority sectors of regional cooperation and integration and economic diversification. UNSIA was encouraged to develop a common strategic framework, link various initiatives, mobilize resources and focus collective efforts in addressing poverty reduction. In that way, bonding between UN-NADAF, the political compact, and UNSIA, the implementing mechanism, would be realized.[8]

4. At its thirty-ninth session, CPC welcomed the close collaboration between the Office of the Special Coordinator for Africa and the Least Developed Countries and the UNSIA secretariat, notably in the presentation of the matrix of recommendations and follow-up to earlier CPC meetings. It was suggested that the matrix could be improved by indicating specific actions taken. However, CPC did request that both entities work more assiduously to achieve harmonization among various bilateral and multilateral initiatives, including the Tokyo International Conference on African Development, and specifically called for a report at its fortieth session on a resource mobilization strategy and action plan.[9]

5. CPC has consistently emphasized, at its many annual deliberations, that Africa had responsibility for identifying its development priorities and that those priorities would determine the content and scope of the global partnership. UNSIA was urged to ensure that African ownership and leadership was prominent in its endeavours. At its fortieth session, CPC acknowledged that significant overall progress was recorded in a number of specific UNSIA areas,[10] but United Nations agencies were encouraged to strengthen collaboration in other clusters. Lead agencies were called upon to develop common strategic frameworks, analyse and highlight problems, set goals, determine respective

roles of organizations, indicate resource requirements and introduce performance indicators.[11]

6. While applauding the resource mobilization strategy that was presented at its fortieth session, CPC expressed the hope that the resource constraints that impeded overall UNSIA progress would be overcome. In that context, the international community was urged to increase official development assistance and foreign direct investment flows to Africa. Areas of regional cooperation and integration needed strengthening by enhancing the capacities of regional and subregional economic groupings. The United Nations system in Africa was encouraged to pursue policies of harmonization, information sharing and strengthened institutional linkages that would ensure a more holistic approach. Finally, CPC called for an independent evaluation at the mid-term of UNSIA covering the first five years of implementation and requested that a report be presented to the Committee at its forty-first session in 2001.[12]

II. The independent evaluation of UNSIA

7. The independent evaluation of UNSIA was conducted early in 2001 by three independent development cooperation experts and the report, along with a note from the Secretary-General, was presented to CPC at its forty-first session. The evaluation report highlighted the initial obstacles that militated against successful United Nations internalization of UNSIA, including scepticism associated with the launch, unrealistic resource expectations, indeterminate African leadership and ownership, limited involvement of donors and United Nations Resident Coordinators and the advent of the United Nations Development Assistance Framework, the new country-level coordination mechanism. The evaluation team therefore suggested that, in the future, African ownership should dictate the form and content of new initiatives so as to overcome hurdles encountered by UNSIA. This suggestion was consistent with the position that had hitherto been taken by CPC on the subject of ownership.

8. The shortcomings, according to the evaluation report, far outweighed the limited accomplishments. The accomplishments, as stated in the report, included the focusing of attention on African development issues, as well as the improvement of inter-agency cooperation in some priority sectors through cluster arrangements and modest resource flows. The main recommendations favoured a new approach of "interlocking dialogues" that would determine and refine priorities and foster effective coordination and harmonization as well as lead to targeted resource mobilization. These would involve African countries and regional institutions, United Nations entities, donors and multilateral development agencies that engage in partnerships supporting African priorities. The report proposed that policy oversight for this approach be vested with CPC and that the Administrative Committee on Coordination monitor and guide United Nations system performance. ECA was considered the logical choice for managing the new approach through its leadership of regional consultations, the African Development Fund and the "Big Table" process involving discussions between development ministers from countries in the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development and African finance ministers, which was inaugurated by ECA in November 2000. Finally, the report concluded that UNSIA should be brought to a close, reducing the number of current initiatives, although recognizing that the valuable experience of "clustering" should be incorporated into United Nations follow-up structures and mechanisms.

9. In consideration of the evaluation report, CPC questioned the conduct of the evaluation and expressed concern about the recommended closure of UNSIA before the termination of UN-NADAF, especially since a mechanism for a successor arrangement for coordination of United Nations system operations in Africa was not clearly spelled out.

III. Lessons from UNSIA

10. A detailed evaluation of the experience of successful clusters under UNSIA reveals that it did serve as an appropriate framework for achieving better coordination among United Nations agencies working in Africa. Although UNSIA failed to live up to expectations fully within the first five years of its existence, there are a number of lessons that can be derived from it that could improve United Nations coordination efforts in Africa and hence United Nations support to African development.

11. Successive reports to CPC pointed to progress in different aspects and areas, inculcating a sense of optimism. This is the legacy of UNSIA, where its value added was beginning to be evident in a few priority sectors.

Africa at the centre of the international development agenda. UNSIA, focused on Africa's development priorities drawn from the 1995 Cairo Agenda for Action, linked to UN-NADAF as its implementation mechanism, enriched the prospects of Africa's centrality at the core of the international community agenda. This was subsequently reaffirmed in the United Nations Millennium Declaration in 2000. Support for Africa's priorities of peace, security and democracy, poverty reduction, debt relief, trade access, HIV/AIDS and resources for sustained development on the continent remained integral to UNSIA.

Limited capacity of UNSIA. Initial discussions at the time of the launch identified 20 priority areas, but these were eventually regrouped and reduced to 13 within the first few months. As UNSIA evolved it became obvious that implementation in all the 13 priority areas placed a strain on its limited capacity, as progress was evident in only a few priorities. At the UNSIA retreat in February 1998, elements that made for progress in the priority areas of education, health, governance and information technology for development were identified. It was therefore recommended that for the credibility and sustainability of UNSIA, the focus should be on these four clusters, thus improving the chances of success that could then be replicated elsewhere at a later stage. Meanwhile, attention should also be paid to capacity-building with other clusters that were lagging so as to develop and strengthen the characteristics that would make for success.

Management partnership. The shared responsibility of ECA and UNDP in co-chairing the Steering Committee of the Administrative Committee on Coordination, providing oversight to UNSIA and reporting annually to the Administrative Committee on Coordination, established an optimistic partnership with the Commission's regional location and focus and the Development Programme's network of country offices around the continent. That experience has now resulted in consolidating the two branches of the UNSIA secretariat in ECA closer to the regional consultation mechanism. This partnership strengthened, inter alia, the Africa Governance Forum. With the recent reaffirmation of the partnership framework between both organizations, signed in October 2001, collaboration will undoubtedly be strengthened.

Reliable resource commitments. With official development assistance in decline and foreign direct investment flows modest for Africa, clarity and reliability of resource flows (e.g. from international sources, reallocation of national budgets, better utilization in terms of aid effectiveness) are an essential precursor to launching any initiative and UNSIA was no exception. Unrealized projections of resources to be generated from international sources eventually sapped political will and institutional commitments necessary to move UNSIA forward. It was impossible to construct programmes in the absence of predictable resource commitments.

Inter-agency coordination architecture. The coordination architecture that framed UNSIA will probably be recognized as the most enduring legacy of that initiative. With United Nations coordinating (lead) and cooperating agencies, including the Bretton Woods institutions, reporting to the highest United Nations system coordinating body, the Administrative Committee on Coordination, a potentially win-win environment had been put in place.

"Clustering" and illustrations of success. Inter-agency coordination and collaboration within the UNSIA framework has been most successful in three of the 13 priority areas. Indicators of success in these areas are most promising for future coordinated United Nations support in Africa.

(a) **Education**. Shared leadership between the World Bank and UNESCO provided effective coordination arrangements that were buttressed by the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) and UNDP as cooperating entities. With a renewed focus on achieving universal primary education and abolition of illiteracy by 2015, criteria for selection of 16 countries with low enrolment rates at the primary level were agreed in consultation with relevant Governments. Each country adopted a strategy and set measurable targets against major United Nations conference goals. Through regular inter-agency consultations, technical working groups of various stakeholders, including civil society and the private sector, a division of labour was established and resource mobilization strategies were drawn up to address country-specific needs. Information was shared and reports describing shared activities were widely disseminated. Within the UNSIA

framework, the concerted efforts of the United Nations entities and the committed leadership of the World Bank and UNESCO in raising trust funds and in the preparation of sector investment programmes demonstrated the resolve of Governments to make progress in this area.

(b) **Governance**. Within the UNSIA framework, the UNDP/ECA leadership in this sector created the Africa Governance Forum, a process of national consultations and an international forum that provides a platform for African Governments, civil society organizations and their international partners to exchange information on best practices, build networks, stimulate policy changes, develop programmes and engender targeted resources in support of good governance on the continent. UNESCO joined in this partnership with its Communications for Peace-building initiative.

Four Africa Governance Forums have been held: the first, in Addis Ababa, in 1997, on a wide-ranging governance agenda; the second, in Accra, in 1998, on the theme of transparency and accountability; the third, in Bamako, in 1999, on conflict management for durable peace and sustainable development; the fourth, in Kampala, in 2000, on parliament and governance. The fifth forum is scheduled to be held in Maputo in 2002 on local governance for poverty reduction. To date, with the exception of three countries, all other sub-Saharan African countries have been associated with the Africa Governance Forum, either as observers or full participants, with 11 countries as repeaters. Some 53 civil society organizations have been actively involved, 25 per cent being women's organizations. Resources upwards of US$ 4 million have been generated so far in support of the Africa Governance Forum from bilateral and multilateral donors and UNDP. In 2001, an evaluation followed by an implementation strategy plan resulted in major recommendations for change, the most far-reaching being the shift to national consultations as the centrepiece of the Africa Governance Forum process.

The major accomplishment of UNSIA in this regard is the introduction of a governance framework, extensive involvement of Governments, civil society and external partners, discussions of sensitive issues with candour and resources generated with the goal of reinforcing a culture of governance in Africa.

(c) **Information Technology for Development**. ECA, as the coordinating agency for this sector, got the approval of the Conference of the Ministers of Economic Development and Planning for the African Information Society Initiative (AISI) in May 1996 as an integral part of the UNSIA framework. As an action framework, AISI exemplified the characteristics that signalled success in UNSIA clusters: committed and effective United Nations cluster leadership, ownership by national authorities and resilient collaborative partnership networks that promote information technology for development and mobilize resources for the initiative.

The first African Development Forum, convened in Addis Ababa in 1999, focused on the theme "The Challenge to Africa of Globalization and the Information Age". It was attended by 950 participants, including senior Government and United Nations officials, technical experts from the public and private sectors and academicians. The Forum is an Africa-led high-level dialogue framework that brings together African policy makers, relevant stakeholders and development partners around continental development challenges, laying out medium and long-term strategies to overcome these challenges. The first Forum expanded networks and generated interest in related information technology projects such as the regional SchoolNet Africa and NGONT Africa, a telecentre network. A clear division of labour was instituted with the International Telecommunication Union being responsible for Internet connectivity, democratization of access to the information society and training. Workshops have been implemented in many countries on the continent. A number of other United Nations agencies have joined in this effort, notably UNESCO, in information retrieval and in collaboration with the World Bank's World Links for Development Programme.

12. Factors which constituted success in the implementation of these clusters included agency leadership in effective partnerships, agreed strategies among United Nations entities and with African authorities, including stakeholders, a consistent official position, well-defined division of responsibilities within work programmes, technical working groups that address difficult problems, setting timelines and benchmarks and preparing resource mobilization strategies. Limited success was recorded in other sectors, in which one or more of these factors were apparent. Thus the health sector benefited from an endorsement by African Health

Ministers, while population and gender received a boost as a result of its mainstreaming by the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA). In the case of health, however, the compelling factor was not necessarily the UNSIA framework, although that was helpful. It was rather the devastation posed by the HIV/AIDS pandemic that obliged the United Nations system (World Health Organization (WHO), UNDP, UNFPA and UNICEF) to adopt a collaborative position exemplified by the Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS (UNAIDS).

13. The water cluster is now showing signs of progress. That cluster encompasses a multiplicity of United Nations agencies, led by the United Nations Environment Programme, the World Meteorological Organization and the World Bank, addressing an array of complex technical issues. In part, owing to the vastness of the subject matter, this cluster was slow to demonstrate coherence until the Executive Secretary of ECA convened a technical working group within the UNSIA framework that brought representatives of several United Nations agencies together. They managed to overcome obstacles arising from individual agency mandates, reaching agreement on priorities and strategies for water in Africa. Assigning responsibilities and sharing information became crucial in this diverse cluster and sustained progress now seems assured.

14. Mobilization of resources remains a daunting challenge to Africa's development and, while expectations were that UNSIA would be effective in this regard, it has not been successful in generating significant additional resources. Donor trust funds have been mobilized in a few instances within the UNSIA framework and the World Bank utilized such resources for education and health, UNDP for governance and ECA for information technology for development.

15. With the exception of some trust funds, resource mobilization has been the most challenging of UNSIA goals. CPC has repeatedly called for improvements in resource commitments to Africa. Important elements of a resource mobilization strategy at country, cluster and inter-country levels have been captured in earlier documents, but a commitment to translate them into reality remains the challenge. At the country level, working through the Resident Coordinator and United Nations country teams, the essential features for a successful strategy are national ownership and leadership, stakeholder consensus, donor supported Sector Investment Programmes (SIPs), Consultative Groups (CGs) and Round Tables (RTs), allocation of national budgets and international r sources such as trust funds and technical assistance grants to overcome policy and capacity impediments. At the cluster level, sector goals consistent with major United Nations conference recommendations and other positive features set out in paragraph 11 above are critical. At the global level, effective advocacy on relevant policy issues is a proven means of attracting support and resources.

IV. United Nations coordination mechanisms

United Nations Development Assistance Framework (UNDAF)

16. The adoption of UNDAF was a significant step in United Nations reform, providing a common framework for programming the United Nations system's operational funds to address national priorities at the country level. To date, 27 UNDAFs in Africa are completed and 7 more are under preparation. Based on the work carried out on the Common Country Assessment (CCA) in several countries,[13] the formulation of UNDAF adequately to reflect the United Nations system comparative advantage at the country level, remains a central challenge for the United Nations. Harmonization of mechanisms and strong claims of national ownership continue to challenge many African countries. The World Bank's Comprehensive Development Framework (CDF) and Poverty Reduction Strategy Papers (PRSP) manage to attract resources as a result of shared macroeconomic analysis, in which the Bank and the ministries of finance play key roles. Steady engagement of all Resident Coordinators and United Nations country teams in Africa, reinforced by resolute messages that UNDAF was an imperative for United Nations reform, resulted in greater systemic internalization than was the case with UNSIA,[14] but a number of obstacles still need to be overcome. However, it is now clear that UNDAF is the way forward for United Nations coordination at the country level.

17. In Africa, UNDAF stands to benefit from some aspects of UNSIA implementation, notably from cluster coordination arrangements. Working through the Resident Coordinator and the United Nations country team, UNSIA was designed to promote coordination and collaboration of operational activities so as to foster joint activities in support of national priorities. While UNDAF is country-specific, the

UNSIA regional dimension grew out of country-driven priorities that formed the basis for cross-border and multi-country collaboration. The setting up of subregional and regional UNDAFs is currently being considered. If they materialize, the experience of UNSIA could prove to be useful in promoting regional approaches to programming which take into account the decisions of major United Nations conferences as well as United Nations agency mandates.

Regional consultations

18. The Economic and Social Council, in its resolution 1998/46, called for the convening of annual consultations of United Nations agencies working in the different regions of the world, including Africa. At the same time, the need for "anchoring" UNSIA in Africa became apparent. These two factors provided the opportunity for linking UNSIA with those consultations,[15] thus creating the potential for enhancing United Nations coordination and coherence in Africa. During the regional consultations, the following adjustments to UNSIA implementation and monitoring were proposed:

- Coordinating agencies should be more proactive in facilitating consensus regarding collaborative work programmes, including resource mobilization strategies, on which basis the UNSIA secretariat would prepare analytical reports on best practices, sharing information widely;
- Cluster implementation progress will be assessed in time-bound actions with performance indicators, such as benchmarking;
- The Office of the Special Coordinator for Africa and the Least Developed Countries and the UNSIA secretariat should perform a clearing house function, which could contribute to streamlining and improving the quality of reports;
- Each regional consultation will devote a special session to the ECA-initiated African Development Forum as a way of stimulating concerted United Nations action;
- The United Nations system should work through the Resident Coordinator to utilize the complementarities of country-level instruments such as CCA, UNDAF, CDF and PRSP, at the same time expanding the knowledge and participation of Resident Coordinators and United Nations country teams in subregional and regional programmes;
- The management decision to consolidate both branches of the UNSIA secretariat within ECA should be implemented.

The United Nations System Chief Executives Board for Coordination — formerly the Administrative Committee on Coordination

19. The United Nations System Chief Executives Board for Coordination (CEB) — formerly the Administrative Committee on Coordination — is the forum which, under the chairmanship of the Secretary-General, brings together the executive heads of all organizations in order to further coordination and cooperation on the whole range of substantive and management issues facing the United Nations system. CEB has two high-level committees, the High-Level Committee on Programmes and the High-Level Committee on Management.

20. In 1995, the Administrative Committee on Coordination set up a Steering Committee for UNSIA to monitor, at the highest United Nations system coordinating level, the progress in the implementation of the Special Initiative. With the transformation of the Administrative Committee on Coordination to CEB, this role is now assigned to the High-Level Committee on Programmes, which will include Africa regularly on its agenda.

Arrangements under the New Agenda for Africa

21. The United Nations programme entitled "New Agenda for Africa" was established subsequent to the identification by the General Assembly of the economic recovery and sustainable development of Africa as a top priority of the Organization. It was designed to be a catalyst and to coordinate and promote activities undertaken by other programmes and entities directly responsible for the operational implementation of such activities. One of the objectives of this programme is to promote a coordinated and effective response by the United Nations system at the policy and operational levels in support of African development. As the coordinator for this programme,

the Office of the Special Coordinator for Africa and the Least Developed Countries has, through the coordination of input from United Nations system agencies, provided support to the intergovernmental bodies in their deliberations relating to African development.[16]

V. The emergence of the African Union and the New Partnership for Africa's Development

22. The Constitutive Act of the African Union, adopted in Lomé on 11 June 2000, set in motion the transformation of the Organization of African Unity (OAU) from a largely political forum to an organization devoted to the pursuit of regional cooperation and integration in the economic, social, cultural and political fields. One year later, in July 2001, the Assembly of Heads of State and Government of OAU, meeting in Lusaka, agreed to establish the African Union. At the same session, the Assembly also adopted the New African Initiative that has since become the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD), a distinctly African initiative that would guide the United Nations and the international community in their responses to the development priorities of Africa.

23. The New Partnership for Africa's Development was developed from a series of intense discussions over a relatively short time frame and the merger of the Millennium Partnership for the African Recovery Programme (MAP) and the OMEGA Plan for Africa, two Africa-rooted initiatives.[17] This comprehensive framework demonstrates the new resolve of Africa's leaders to chart a course of sustainable development and poverty reduction through a "common vision and shared conviction". Recognizing the failures of past initiatives, such as the lack of political commitment, the idealistic nature of plans, unrealistic expectations from the international community, the disconnection between plans and national programmes, the lack of ownership by the people and non-involvement of the private sector, NEPAD seeks to build a partnership framework on the basis of Africa's assessments of needs and priorities. Indications of positive support have been given by many external partners, notably from the United Nations and its various entities, the Bretton Woods institutions, the African Development Bank, the Group of 8, the European Union and Japan.

24. The New Partnership for Africa's Development reflects a commitment to strengthening capacity and building mechanisms so as to ensure political and economic governance and peace and security. Expansion of information and communication technologies, reinforcement and development of infrastructure in water and sanitation, transport and energy, improving agriculture and market access, enhancing human development (health, education and poverty alleviation) and attracting capital flows and sourcing funds for assistance are the areas of focus. A system of mutual accountability through peer reviews is planned, utilizing the Heads of State Implementation Committee, a steering committee and the secretariat. This African-owned and led partnership framework has set out a blueprint that calls for a well-coordinated United Nations response to Africa's development priorities. As NEPAD clarifies and consolidates its mission at regional and country levels, flexibly applied resources will be needed to enhance capacity and reinforce sustainability. Therein lies the challenge to the international community.

VI. The way forward

25. With the launching of NEPAD, Africa's leaders have made a definitive statement regarding the ownership and leadership of the continent's political and economic agenda. Given the strong expressions of support by the United Nations and the international community for NEPAD, Africa will remain at the centre of the international development agenda, reinforcing the earlier commitment contained in the United Nations Millennium Declaration. The overarching goals of peace, security and poverty reduction remain constant for Africa, demanding in parallel a United Nations system response that demonstrates coherence and commitment and that will achieve greater harmonization of its programmes.

26. At its October 2001 meeting, CEB welcomed the visionary decision taken by the African leaders at the Lusaka Summit to launch the New African Initiative. This was consistent with the three basic policy directives emanating from its earlier Nairobi session: the United Nations system should exercise restraint in launching new initiatives; unite in supporting African-owned and led initiatives; and focus inter-agency coordination at the regional level. CEB reached several

important decisions on the conduct of future United Nations support for programmes in Africa:

- All United Nations organizations should review their programmes in the light of NEPAD priorities;
- Africa's requirements remain central on the international agenda and in international negotiations;
- In order to reinforce regional coordination mechanisms in support of NEPAD, United Nations system participation in inter-agency regional consultations should be under the aegis of the ECA framework;
- At the country level, complementarities among frameworks should be sought to minimize reporting and other transaction costs, improve harmonization and strengthen coordination of bilateral and multilateral development cooperation activities as recommended by the 2001 high-level segment of the Economic and Social Council;
- Lessons that could assist African countries and development partners in pursuing NEPAD priorities should be drawn from the final review of UN-NADAF.

27. Africa's leaders have launched NEPAD with great resolve, fully aware of the failures of past initiatives. Much can be learned from the recent experience of UN-NADAF and UNSIA. Those lessons have been documented in the UN-NADAF evaluation report and in the current report to CPC.

28. At the country level, as NEPAD seeks to become a reality in the national environment, the Resident Coordinator and United Nations country team should reinforce programme instrumentalities in order to strengthen the partnership framework. In-country coordination arrangements led by national authorities and entities, that is, Government, civil society and the private sector, combined with the efforts of multilateral and bilateral partners, should seek to reconcile frameworks and programmes such as UNDAF, PRSP and CDF, thereby reducing transaction costs to overstretched national authorities. Linkages with NEPAD peer review mechanisms and United Nations programme oversight and reporting should be constructed and strengthened.

29. It is essential that inter-agency coordination at the regional level should be translated into clear and concrete measures that are consistently applied.

30. The Annual Regional Consultations under the auspices of ECA decided to adopt a mechanism for United Nations coordination of its support to NEPAD, utilizing the cluster arrangements drawn from the experience of UNSIA. There has been considerable dialogue between a number of United Nations agencies and the NEPAD Steering Committee and the NEPAD secretariat on direct support to NEPAD. This initial decentralized approach to securing support from United Nations agencies reflected the recognition that individual agencies had competitive strengths which would be tapped as the need arises, in a sequential and incremental manner. However, there is still a need to determine how United Nations system coordination would fit into the broader context of coordination of support to NEPAD by all actors, with the ownership of the process being retained by the African countries themselves.

31. Over the past 10 years, the Office of the Special Coordinator for Africa and the Least Developed Countries has been responsible for coordinating input from the United Nations system in support of inter-governmental deliberations at United Nations Headquarters in New York. In the Ministerial Declaration of the 2001 high-level segment of the Economic and Social Council, the request was made to review the secretariat structures charged with the follow-up of UN-NADAF and the Secretary-General's 1998 report on the causes of conflict and the promotion of durable peace and sustainable development in Africa (see A/56/3, chap. III, para. 29). As far as the future is concerned, the issue of how best to coordinate input from the United Nations system and other support of the intergovernmental deliberations on African development in the General Assembly and its subsidiary bodies will have to be determined in the context of the final review and appraisal of UN-NADAF.

Notes

[1] See *Official Records of the General Assembly, Fifty-sixth Session, Supplement No. 16* (A/56/16).

[2] E/AC.51/2001/6 and Corr.1.

[3] E/AC.51/2001/7.

[4] See E/AC.51/1997/6.

[5] Water, food security, governance, social and human development and resource mobilization.

[6] See E/AC.51/1997/7.

[7] See E/AC.51/1997/L.4/Add.42.

[8] See E/AC.51/1998/L.7/Add.28.

[9] See *Official Records of the General Assembly, Fifty-fourth Session, Supplement No. 16* (A/54/16).

[10] Governance, information technology for development, education, health, population and gender.

[11] See *Official Records of the General Assembly, Fifty-fifth Session, Supplement No. 16* (A/55/16).

[12] Ibid.

[13] Forty-one CCAs have been completed and nine are under way.

[14] See the Joint Nordic assessment of the CCA/UNDAF process, entitled "Laying the Keystone of United Nations Development Reform: the CCA/UNDAF Experience" of October 2001.

[15] Three Annual Regional Consultation Meetings of United Nations Agencies Working in Africa have been held: the first, chaired by the Deputy Secretary-General, was held in Nairobi in March 1999. The two others, chaired by the ECA Executive Secretary, were held in Addis Ababa in June 2000 and October 2001.

[16] In addition to the Office of the Special Coordinator for Africa and the Least Developed Countries, ECA and the Department of Public Information/Africa Recovery Unit also have subprogrammes under this programme.

[17] The effort towards the merger benefited from the Compact for African Recovery developed by the Economic Commission for Africa.